

Fernald of the Gray Herbarium and members of the staff of the Kew Gardens for aid in this study.

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WHAT IS SCIRPUS GLAUDESCENS WILLD.?

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WILLDENOW'S description is as follows:

*3. *SCIRPUS glaucescens*.

S. culmo compresso glaucescente, vaginis truncatis, spica solitaria lanceolata, squamis ovatis, radice repente.

Habitat in America boreali 24 D.

Radix perennis repens. *Culmus* sesquipedalis et ultra glaucovirescens compressus. *Vaginae* ad culmi basin truncatae muticae laxae. *Spica* lanceolata vix semipollicaris. *Squamae* ovatae superiores ovato-lanceolatae obtusiusculae, margine membranaceae. *Stamina* tria. *Stylus* trifidus. *Semen* obovatum apice tuberculatum. *Setae* longitudine seminis.

It would be a difficult matter to draw a better description than the above of the plant now passing as *Eleocharis acuminata* (Muhl.) Nees. It cannot be *E. palustris* (L.) R. & S., because that species is not known to have three styles; if *E. palustris* in any of its variations has three styles, I have been so unfortunate as not to have had any such pass under my observation. Three-styled plants should be excluded from the two-styled *Eleocharis palustris*. Fernald and Brackett, in this journal for April, 1929, have monographed the group *Palustres* of the genus *Eleocharis*, and have recognized eight species and two varieties. They give an extended discussion of this species, but, presumably, call it a small form of *E. palustris*, mainly because A. Gray identified the plant in the Willdenowian herbarium as *E. palustris*. Since A. Gray identified the Willd. Herb. plant as *E. palustris*, it is to be supposed that it must be two-styled, and therefore not the plant Willdenow described as *Scirpus glaucescens*, which had three styles. If the Willd. Herb. plant has three styles, then A. Gray misidentified it, and it is not *E. palustris*. Someone who has access to the plant may determine the number of styles in order to prove whether or not it is *E. palustris*. Willdenow's description, with the exception perhaps of the "glaucovirescens" character is quite applicable to *E. acuminata*, and his characters of *three styles* and *compressed stems* clinch the identity. No other species of the

genus known to me so well fills the bill; certainly not the plants in America masquerading as *E. glaucescens*, for they have two stigmas and the stems are not compressed.

My conclusion is that *Scirpus glaucescens* Willd. ex descr. (non herb?) or *ELEOCHARIS GLAUCESCENS* (Willd.) Schultes is *E. acuminata* (Muhl.) Nees (*E. compressa* Sulliv.).

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WILLDENOW'S TYPE OF SCIRPUS GLAUCESCENS

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WHEN Miss Brackett and I pointed out¹ that *Eleocharis glaucescens* (Willd.) Schultes had long been misunderstood in this country, we emphasized the fact that it was described by Willdenow as having 3 style-branches. We also published Gray's manuscript memorandum made upon studying the Willdenow type: "*glaucescens!* (spec. cult. but very poor) nothing to do with *S. tenuis*, but certainly *S. palustris!*" But we did not accept this identification primarily upon the authority of Gray, as might be inferred from Mr. Farwell's statement in the preceding article. Ascherson & Graebner, who certainly were so situated as to know what Willdenow had before him but who surely did not know of Gray's unpublished memorandum, had reached the same conclusion;² so had Richter,³ Rouy,⁴ Hegi,⁵ and various other competent European students. In order again to determine what Willdenow had, Mr. J. F. Macbride, of the Field Museum, when studying type-specimens at the Botanisches Museum at Berlin-Dahlem, was asked to examine the specimen. His reply follows:

"As the Willdenow specimen is very meager, so that I dared not disturb one of the two heads, I asked Dr. Mattfeld (Curator of the *Cyperaceae* here) to confirm my observation regarding the number of style-branches. There are two styles visible and these appear to be unbroken and certainly to have only *two* branches! The specimen had been cultivated in the Garden and Dr. Mattfeld suggests that owing to the spiral arrangement of the flowers Willdenow may have seen seemingly three style-branches as this can be a mistake easy to make from fresh material when one may overtop or overlie another."

¹ RHODORA, xxxi. 61, 74 (1929).

² Aschers. & Graebn. Synop. Mitteleurop. Fl. ii². 291 (1903).

³ Richter, Pl. Europ. i. 142 (1890).

⁴ Rouy, Fl. de France, xiii. 361 (1912).

⁵ Hegi, Ill. Fl. Mittel.-Eur. ii. 38 (1909).